THE
McALL MISSION
IN FRANCE.

Quarterly Record

EDITED BY

REV. CHARLES E. GREIG, M.A.

VOL. II. No. 8. OCTOBER, 1884. PRICE 1D.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Introductory, by the Editor,	169
Signs of Life, by R. W. M.,	172
The Work in Lyons, by A. S. D. C.,	174
Experiences of a Door-keeper, by E. H. M.,	175
Young Women's Meetings, by L. M.,	179
Marks of Progress (*concluded*), by M. L. D.,	181
Receivers of Contributions,	184

INTRODUCTORY.

TO the eye of even the most intent onlooker, but little of new has shown itself in our Mission during this quarter. God has graciously heard our prayers and checked for this time the advance of the cholera. As an epidemic it has not been known outside the departments of the Gard, Hérault, Aude, Var, Bouches du Rhône, and Pyrénées Orientales, though single cases, generally of a

London: S. W. Partridge & Co., 9 Paternoster Row.

much milder character, have occurred all over France. But for Toulon and Marseilles, however, the outbreak would have attracted no attention outside professional circles. None of our staff have been taken from us, though at Marseilles more than one was temporarily laid down. Too cordial thanks, in the name of the Lord of the harvest, cannot be given to those who not only continued with us, but even came over to help us in spite of the greatly exaggerated danger of taking cholera, and much more real danger of exhaustion through the intense heat. The scarcity of speakers was more felt than ever before, as every Christian worker who could take his holiday in July or August did so, to be ready to reappear at his post the instant the enemy should show face in Paris. Thanks, however, to the devotion of such men as Duchemin of Lyons, and Paul Monod of Montauban, who spent their holidays in speaking in the Paris halls, and to the courtesy of the few pastors who remained in town, no district was left without its weekly proclamation of the Gospel.

One or two purely local fêtes were given to certain favoured Sunday schools, but want of money happily prevented any general "outing." In this connection we must congratulate ourselves on the return of Mr. Taft, whom America has sent back to us fuller than ever of zeal on behalf of the Gospel. In conjunction with the Paris Sunday-School Union, we have projected and are trying to draw up an enlarged children's hymn book, for the use of our meetings and of the Protestant Sunday schools.

Want of space has unfortunately prevented our printing two striking "aperçus" of the present state of France, morally and religiously, one from the Rev. Dr. Beard of the American church, Paris, and the other from Professor Yeatman, editor of *Galignani's Messenger*. Those who wish to be able to speak intelligently of the France of to-day, and who have begun to suspect the infallibility of "our own correspondent," political or religious, would do well to procure copies of the *Andover Review*, of the American *Christian World*, and of Miss Leigh's *Echoes from Paris*, and to ponder on what they find therein written.

Readers will note the appeal for books in the article on Young Women's meetings. Are there not a good many tattered French story books lying on your shelves in that very remotest

corner where you bestowed them with a grin of delight the day after you left school for good? I scarcely think you will ever read them again, but these girls would; yes, even "Télémaque," and "l' Histoire de Charles XII," and "La Piccola;" and they would weep over "Paul et Virginie," and sigh over "Corinne," for very different reasons from you: might we not have them? Now is the time to replenish our libraries; any books sent to the care of Messrs. Lorimer & Gillies, 31 St. Andrew Square, Edinburgh, before the end of October, will be safely conveyed across the Channel by the editor of the *Quarterly*. Yet another appeal. A *Girls' Own Paper* in French would perhaps hardly yet cover the expense of printing; but if any one would make us a present of the largest-sized Cyclostyle, the practical worth of Mademoiselle Monod's suggestion might at once be put to the test. Since February, a quarto Cyclostyle has done good service in the children's department, but it would be rather small for this new purpose.

From an account sent us by Mr. Soltau of an interesting little ceremony at the Rue d'Allemagne, we extract the following paragraph:—

After singing, M. Clouet, the indefatigable helper of Mr. Newell in the station, began the proceedings of the evening by requesting Mr. Newell to accept the presidency of the "Société Fraternelle," handing him, Mrs. Newell, and their son, cards of membership. Then, he continued, he had to ask him to accept something else from his hands,—a little expression of the love and gratitude they all felt towards him for his kindness and patient work among them. He then presented an elegant coffee-pot and salver to Mr. and Mrs. Newell. It was easy to see from the faces of the people how sincere was their pleasure in thus being able to give this expression to their feelings—and how true was the attachment between the strangers and themselves. Mr. Newell replied, with much feeling, saying how unexpected was the present, and how much touched he felt by their great kindness. The one desire Mrs. Newell and himself had, was that they might help them to turn and love the Lord Jesus, and become His followers; that they might have the true "liberté," "egalité," and "fraternité," amongst them.

Just as the last proof goes off to the printer, news comes of a new children's meeting at Nantes, with a weekly attendance

of seventy-five. Shall we say that the omen is good, or that the Master is calling again to work?

Signs of Life During "the Dead Season."

Our Continental brethren style the hot summer months, with respect to Christian work, "*la morte saison*," and truly the custom is wonderfully efficacious in bearing out the gloomy epithet. All extra public services are suspended for about three months; the Sabbath schools, also, are disbanded, as if to invite the scholars to give the Lord's Day to amusement. On commencing our mission, twelve years and a-half ago, we were sagely forewarned that it would be inevitably necessary to close all our mission-rooms, at least during July and August, because no one would attend during the heat. Convinced that such an interruption could not fail to scatter those we had gathered, and greatly to enfeeble our influence alike on old and young, we resolved from the outset, in face of these disheartening predictions, and of the great difficulty of securing a sufficient staff of workers in Paris during the general vacation time, to endeavour to keep the whole in movement with as much vigour as practicable. Careful observation convinces us that this step was greatly for the best. It is true that, at times, when the broiling sun renders the streets almost insupportable, the indefatigable workers have to be tried by seeing diminished numbers assembled; and visitors who are searching out Mr. Greig, at such a moment, in one of his Sunday schools or children's meetings, would form little idea of the numbers and vigour characterising them at other seasons. But in spite of all these drawbacks, a really large number of persons hear the Gospel in our rooms right through the summer, and we are convinced that the *regularity* of the services has greatly promoted regularity of attendance. I could also quote instances of decided conversion which have occurred at this period of the year.

Having just returned (23rd August) from my own annual vacation, I am moved to pay this tribute to our invaluable friend, the Rev. Horace Noel, also to the Editor of the *Quarterly*, with the Christian ladies and others, who have zealously carried forward the work while some others of us were seeking needful rest.

The Sabbath (24th August), the day after Mrs. McAll and I

returned to Paris, rather remarkably confirmed what I have thus written. Here is a sketch of the very first meeting I conducted—that of the afternoon at Rue St. Honoré, whose winter attendance averages fully 200. Instead of finding an empty room, I saw from 130 to 140 persons assembled—mostly French, of course, but including a little band of Christian visitors, Scotch, American, and English. Before I could commence the meeting, an intelligent young man, present for the third time, came up to me, desiring full instruction respecting the Gospel. I commended him to one of my young colleagues. The hymns, the prayers, the Bible-reading, the addresses of Messrs. Saillens and Samuel Anderson, all were full of life and warmth. But here was one very touching feature. The good man and his wife from Monte Video, of whose remarkable conversion an account is given in last year's Annual Report (pages 43 and 44), were present, and, it was understood, for the last time ere returning to their distant home. Mrs. M^cAll and I offered them a book in remembrance of us, and then M. Saillens publicly addressed them in presence of all assembled, warning them of the new dangers, temptations, and probably persecutions, which would attend their return to their distant home; charging them to be faithful, exhorting them to care for their benighted neighbours—to seek to be "a light shining in a dark place." Mr. Anderson concluded by affectionately commending them to our Heavenly Father. It seemed as if all present were moved—the good man himself could scarcely speak to us for tears. M. Saillens well remarked: "Here was an ample recompense for all the labour expended on the Rue de Rivoli station—had these two foreigners only been led to Christ;" but, thank God, there are many others. The wife, it may be remembered, came into the light more speedily than her husband: it was afterwards, in our aggregate evangelistic meetings in the Oratoire du Louvre (designed to follow up those of Messrs. Moody and Sankey), that he dared, with a faltering voice, to declare himself on the Lord's side. "Now," said the wife to our friends, with a deep Christian feeling, "my dear husband has gone beyond me" (*il m'a dépassée*).

At the close of the meeting, a venerable Frenchman and his wife—both, I should judge, over seventy—desired to speak to me, stating that they had experienced, during the afternoon,

emotions such as they had never known before. They had entered the room ignorant of its purpose; their breathless attention struck all around them. Both expressed an earnest desire to lay hold on the pure truth of the Gospel. May God enable us to follow them up, and lead them to the Saviour! I ought to add, the day was one of the most sultry of a Paris summer. We went away, thankfully saying, "Life, after all, during the dead season."

R. W. McALL.

The Work in Lyons.

Three months ago, on taking up the work of the Mission in Lyons, I found in our four salles five meetings held weekly. I am glad to say that at this date we have nine; and that before the end of the year we hope nearly to double the latter number.

Our meetings are at present held in four quarters of the city, wide apart; and in these four salles, I intend meanwhile to concentrate and augment the work, as strength and grace is given. One of the salles, however, will be changed for another in its neighbourhood, which I hope to see answering the function of Head-Quarters to the Mission. I have as yet seen very few of our provincial meeting-places, but the new salle of the Avenue de Saxe, which replaces the old one of the Avenue de Noailles, without any additional expense to the Mission, will be, so far as I am aware, second only in size, appearance, and position, to the Salle Baltimore on the Boulevard de la Bonne Nouvelle, Paris. We mean to have in it, not only the usual evangelistic meetings on Sunday and during the week, but also Scriptural illustration and instruction by aid of the lime-light, singing meetings, and a central Société Fraternelle. On Saturday nights there will also be a general prayer meeting (at present existing) held in the same place. Sabbath afternoon meetings for children and adults are already held at the most distant and opposite points of our circuit, after-meetings for prayer are invariably held, and local Sociétés Fraternelles are to be organised in October. Our four lending libraries are well patronised, but will be reorganised on a new footing. So much for organisation already effected, and in immediate prospect. We have the

hearty co-operation of the whole of the French Protestant pastoral element, although its value is relative. My close co-adjutor is Monsieur le Pasteur Coste, whose voice is always welcome among us, and whose one theme is Jesus Christ and His salvation. I am thankful to be able to say that I am receiving invaluable help, in various ways, from the members of the "Union Chrétienne des Jeunes Gens." I find amongst them a mine of latent power and grace for evangelistic work.

A spirit of *enthusiasm* has already begun to develop among us. It is known that the Lord Himself is working. The humblest Christian ouvrière in the salles is asking the Lord for great things in prayer, and watching for abundant answer. After every evangelistic meeting, about two-thirds of the entire audience in each salle remain for a brief season of individual prayer, led by different brethren in succession. I mean very shortly imperceptibly to merge some of these into regular after-meetings. I wish we had some workers who could undertake personally to speak to anxious ones, whose presence begins to be observable in considerable numbers. As yet, with much to look to, I have only been able to speak a word to one here and there. During the tropical heat of this summer, it has been impossible for me to visit much the homes of the people during the day; but I have the best hope that this work will now be undertaken by several besides myself. This will prove, here as elsewhere, the most effective method of getting at the hearts of the people for decision for the Lord.

A. S. D. Colquhoun.

Experiences of a Door-keeper.

Having been invited to note down some of my experiences as a "door-keeper" or *portière* in the McAll Mission, and being willing to magnify my office as akin to that of the "mighty men of valour,"—the porters who, with the singers, "kept the ward of their God,"—I just proceed to explain, for the benefit of strangers, that a door-keeper, *portière*, or "dame de la porte," is a *lady*, charged, in one or more of the McAll halls, with the multifarious offices of *inner*-gatekeeper, deputy-hostess, hall-policeman and supervisor, tract and Testament-distributor, general informant, and, later on, friend and visitor to those who accept the invitation handed them at the door, and enter—

some as old comers, some as strangers for the first time—to listen to the Gospel of God boldly preached before all Paris, without form or ceremony, "without money and without price."

Shyly, at first, the Parisian enters in, and, unless otherwise persuaded, persists in abiding near the door, ready to bolt out the moment he hears anything "too strong" for his weak or dead faith; but, in most instances, he becomes riveted, and, by degrees, glides up nearer the *orateur, asks* for the rejected hymn-book, and sinks into the rejected seat. The honest countryman, the man of the world, the supercilious young "boulevardier," the earnest Catholic,—all come in with the same surprised and bewildered look; but, if not the first time, at least the *second* time they remain attentive to the *end*. "The foolishness of preaching," especially preaching such a "monstrous folly" as the *Resurrection*, may elicit marked, sometimes noisy, dissent and ridicule, and many go out; but go out to return again. The "foolishness of preaching" wins in the end. "Madame," a gentleman said to me, "how dare your speakers preach such nonsense before all Paris" (*prêcher de telles sotises en plein Paris*). "They preach because the *sotises* (folly) of *God* is wiser than men, sir." Dissatisfied, he goes out, but returns again and again, and listens earnestly to the fervent vindication of "the Divine folly" of God in giving His only Son to die for sinners.

As the eye of the lady ranges over the hall, she notices numbers of quiet, devout listeners, once the very trouble of her life to keep in order, now regular attendants, and often sincere converts, exhorting others, fresh comers, to orderly behaviour.

As a rule the authority of the lady is recognised politely, and often amusingly appealed to. "I do wish you would speak to this gentleman, madame," says a Shakesperean-looking individual. "He is muttering so loud, I cannot hear the preacher. It is too bad! could you not put him out?" In the speaker the lady recognises one who had himself "been spoken to" and threatened a few nights ago with "putting out;" but now his soul is thirsty, and his thirst must be quenched. "Putting out" is much dreaded as a disgrace. Generally a little persuasion or a few marked words suffice. "Your young friend is fresh from the country, I observe; you should teach him to sing better," is said to the neighbour of a giddy, well-attired young gentleman, who was doing his best to perplex the singers and

amuse his comrades. "Oh no, not so, I assure you, madame," is the reply. "Pardon me, sir; no *Parisien* could sing or behave so badly." The young man is quenched, for every Parisian piques himself on being an accomplished man of the world. "Why do you not give *me* a little book like the others?" he asks, with mock anxiety. "No, sir, no book for you; I never give the Word of God to mockers." An approving bow from the others passing out showed the feelings of the many. The groups round the door, and the passers-out are discussing the strange or new things they have seen and heard. A cry of commendation occasionally arises, towards the end more loudly-expressed approval; though sometimes a decided "Libre Penseur" dashes out as if he could no longer sit and hear the truth he denies, so eloquently and successfully pleaded. Franker, true men express their assent or pleasure, and pour out questions: "What is this society? who pays all this?" "Rothschild," says one. "No, it is the Gallican Church," says another. "I tell you they are Protestants," says a woman. "No, they are Jews," says her husband. "Anyhow, it is true, and does one good," says a third. A gentleman with a cross on his breast approaches. "Who is the preacher, madame? What is the aim of this meeting? I highly approve of it all; the orator is eloquent and convincing; *il est fort.* Did I live in Paris, I would come every night."

"It is touching," says another gentleman, with a red ribbon in his button-hole. "This is *true* eloquence! Are there other halls like this in Paris? It is a noble work! *c'est beau!*" Then a young workman whispers softly, "What was the number of the *cantique* just sung, madame?" "It was Number Fourteen: 'Sinner, Return'" "That's it! I want to buy a book with *that cantique* in it." He gets one for twopence. Another time an old gentleman of refined appearance accosts the portress. "I have a favour to ask, madame; I wish to take this book," hugging a hymn-book, "away with me: can it be bought?" "Yes, but not *that* one; it is marked for the Hall use. To-morrow I will give you a new one; I have unfortunately sold the last to-night." "Oh, madame, do not refuse me; I am an old man," he pleaded. "I may never come again, for I live far from Paris. Never mind the mark; I *must* have this book, the words comfort my heart!" So an exception was made, and with a grateful bow he departed. In the smaller halls the people get personally attached to their lady. "If you abandon

us, *we* shall abandon you," they say. "Her sympathetic face attracts us," is the reason given for fuller attendances when "the lady" is among them. Courtesy and kindness win their confidence, while they keenly resent what they consider discourtesy. An old woman who practised the honourable art of umbrella-mending, once said to me, with a dignified bow, as she passed out of the Hall, "You will observe, madame, that I *never* take a tract." I soon elicited the fact that a former lady, while distributing tracts and Testaments at the door, *alluded* to the old woman in her hearing as "she" instead of "madame." It was an unpardonable offence! "From that day, madame, I have made it a rule never to take a tract." I never could find out who the miscreant was who called the old lady "she;" but her work remains to this day—a warning to all portresses!

The courteous invitation to *accept* Testaments, as all else, *gratuitously*, is a puzzle to them. "How much to pay?" says a countryman, before resting his weary limbs on the proferred chair. "Nothing." He gapes, but *sits*. "How much to pay?"—as, anxious to join in the sweet strain, he yet hesitates to take the proferred hymn-book. "Nothing." "How much to pay?" he asks again, on being handed a little gospel and tract at the end of the meeting. "Nothing." Gaping, he goes out and unburdens himself to the man at the door outside. "Well! see that, and that, and that, and the chair, and the *cantique*, and the discourse, and the 'lady,' all for nothing! *C'est moi qui suis content!* Is there a hall like this at Neuilly? I like what they say here, it is true and reasonable—*pas comme chez nous*, at St. Peter's." Yes, all for *nothing*, and yet pence and coin are often slipped into the box at the door, "for the good work," as they tell the lady going out. And as she hands gospel after gospel to the eager claimants passing out, answering questions, and exchanging friendly greetings,—which lead to visits, Bible-readings, prayer, and conversions,—she feels that though neither an "orator," a president, nor a chief musician, she is still, by the favour of God, a "*helper* in the war" carried on in the M^c^All halls against sin, and ignorance, and unbelief; a "helper" on the way to those who, perhaps, slowly and with difficulty are drawing nigh to the feet of that Saviour, Jesus, so long hidden, and now so freely lifted up before their eyes.

E. H. Moggridge.

Young Women's Meetings.

DEAR MR. GREIG,—In accordance with your request, I send you a few details regarding our Young Women's Meetings. I know that you would have liked to have a rapid sketch of all those existing in Paris, but that I could not give you at this moment, so many people just now are out of town. I shall, therefore, only speak of the genuine "Réunions Populaires des Jeunes Filles." The organisation of these is again due to our dear McAll Mission, and certainly it is not its least claim to consideration. Those who have thorough knowledge of our country, who understand the influence for good or for bad which every woman exerts in her home, will be readily disposed to look for great blessing from the Lord upon our quiet little meetings for young women.

During the winter there are, I think, six of these meetings held weekly; unfortunately, those who direct them being absent on their holidays, I cannot get exact information respecting each. The only ones remaining open this summer are those at Belleville and at Ornano. The former has about twenty names on the roll, and counts an average attendance of twelve each Sunday. The meeting lasts an hour, being devoted to the study of a portion of Scripture chosen beforehand, to the singing of hymns, and to prayer, in which the girls themselves join. If I am not mistaken, they have formed among themselves a sort of Bible Union. The Ornano meeting is somewhat differently organised. We meet every Sunday, from four to half-past five; during the first half of the time the girls make lint, and I read to them some interesting and attractive work, varied with plenty of singing, after which we devote ourselves to a careful study of the Bible. The Gospel of Matthew is our subject just now, and it is a real joy to see how much enthusiasm the girls throw into the study, eagerly answering the questions that are put to them. They have a "list," showing what verses to read each day, and the mother of two of them told me that as soon as her daughters are out of bed, before doing anything whatever about the house, they take their Bibles and read the day's lesson. We are not yet very numerous, only twenty-one girls are on the roll, and many of them live so far away that they find it quite impossible to come regularly. But it must be remembered that our meeting has been in existence only ten months, and besides

that this is the time of year when the "promenades" offer the greatest attractions. No one need be astonished, therefore, if we often have only eight or ten present. The *good weather* will soon be back: the cold, the wind, and the rain.

The great hindrance to having large and well-attended meetings, is the difficulty of visiting the girls in their own homes. Almost all of them literally pass their lives in some workshop or other; they go there in the morning, taking their *déjeuner* with them, and are seldom back before eight o'clock, often even later. Now, it is very rarely that a girl comes to a meeting of her own accord; if you wish to reach her you must go and seek her in her own home, give her an invitation with your own hand, make acquaintance with her *outside* the meeting. Certainly bills and advertisements are useful in certain cases, but, as a general rule, they do not do much good. The girls will not come to the meeting unless they are persuaded that we have given ourselves some trouble to get them, and especially if, from the very beginning, we have shown ourselves sympathetic. This is, if not *the* essential, certainly *an* essential qualification for every one who is called of the Lord to work among the young. To exert a wholesome influence over our girls, to gain their entire confidence, they must feel not only that we love them, but that we understand them, that we comprehend their longings, that we know what are the temptations to which they are exposed. May I add, in all simplicity, *young* people are perhaps better qualified than others to work among the youth of France, in consequence of the secret natural affinity between those of the same age, or nearly so, which makes their relations freer and more cordial.

I scarcely need to say that we lend out books every week to our girls; but, alas! it is easy to count the French works that are both attractive and moral. And, besides, one must possess those that do exist, and to buy books one must have—money. Last October, when we opened the Ornano meeting, I gathered from door to door, not pence, but books, and got together, in that way, about twenty volumes, besides some sent from Switzerland. Nevertheless, it is easy to understand that during the year, our girls have had time to read and re-read the thirty volumes at their disposal. It would be a great boon could that figure be at once more than doubled. But it must never be lost sight of in choosing works destined for that sort of

library, that they ought to be not only good and useful, but *interesting*. For, to keep hold of these girls, especially those who are not yet decided Christians, it is absolutely necessary that what they get to read be attractive as well as useful. If we put into their hands works of an exclusively religious character, destitute of all gaiety and animation, not only will they not read them, but we shall actually run counter to the object we have in view: the girls will only too easily find in some vile book the unwholesome food from which it is our great desire to keep them. In short, we need new books.

There is yet another thing which I should like for our girls: a weekly paper, of the same description as *La Feuille Populaire*, but written specially for them. Our young sisters of England, Scotland, and America, know with what pleasure they receive the "papers" and "gazettes" destined for them. It is true we have in France the paper *La Femme*, but its price (4 fr., equal about 3s. 6d.) puts it out of the reach of our workwomen's purses; and, besides, it is not written for them, but for people in easy circumstances. If this letter were not already so long, I might, perhaps, allow myself to give some hints on this subject to our friends across the seas: another time, perhaps.

Before ending, I should like to ask our brothers and sisters who are really laying to heart the reformation and salvation of France, not to forget in their prayers our meetings for young women. Certainly they are called to do good. Ask God to make them numerous and living: ask Him to give by His Holy Spirit to those who direct them, light, wisdom, strength, and perseverance; ask Him, especially, to make of these meetings a means, chosen by Himself, of bringing many souls captive to the feet of Jesus.

L. Monod.

Marks of Progress.

(*Continued.*)

I was able to devote some time to visiting in the east of Paris, and found there not a few cheering lights shining in the surrounding darkness. I had also the pleasure of attending M. Monod's Bible-lecture at the Faubourg St. Antoine. It was not numerously attended, but the forty men and women present listened with rapt attention, for three-quarters of an hour, to one of M. Monod's beautiful, Scriptural, spiritual

expositions—full of the living Jesus and His power to save from sin. I had already read fragments of it in reports of Christian conferences in this country; but it came to me with double power, as I looked at those descendants of old revolutionary Paris, drinking in every word, their faces every now and then beaming with joyful intelligence, as if the victory of which he spoke were not unknown to them. I thought, forty people sitting week by week under such teaching must be a power in the neighbourhood.

On Monday evenings there is a prayer-meeting, attended mostly by the same people. M. Monod also presides at it usually, but when he is absent the people carry it on themselves. On Wednesday and Sunday evenings the regular meetings in this salle are well attended, while Mr. Saillens' fortnightly "Société Fraternelle" gives opportunity for testimony and mutual encouragement. The schools furnish an active outlet for the Christian life thus fostered, and form a nursery for teachers as well as for scholars. The mere enumeration of Mr. Greig's "moniteurs," as we call them there, would be most interesting—a blacksmith, a retired cook, several girls and young men, all, I think, including the two Bible-women, converts of the mission, except a Scotch gentleman. Most of these, with Mr. Greig's own friends, sit down in the hall in English fashion to tea, after Sunday school, and edify one another with conversation, gay and easy, yet seasoned with salt. Then such of the company as are bound for Ivry meeting go on foot there, such as are for Bercy go to Bercy, while others remain where they are to help the evening's work.

I was present at a workers' meeting in Rue St. Honoré, when Sunday schools was the subject under discussion, and the thing that delighted me most was to see the bronzed faces of two or three of these sons of toil,—conspicuous among the crowd of English and French helpers of all sorts,—as they leant forward, listening eagerly, as if life and death depended on their learning the best and newest methods of teaching.

It does not do to take anything for granted in Paris, I find,—not even the belief in a God. I am quite sure that many beginners in Christian work there wonder why their words do not *grip* (to use an expressive Scotticism), and the reason is, that they assume that their hearers believe what in reality they do not believe, or understand; what they are as ignorant

of as a three-years' child. One may find one's-self arguing against Romanism with a rank Materialist, repeating "Only believe" to one who does not acknowledge he has a soul to save, or presenting the consolations of the Gospel and the hope of heaven to one who honestly thinks that he has done his duty so well that God cannot possibly be angry with him! "I have my religion, as you have yours," is a common saying. If, thinking the speaker is a zealous Catholic, one begins to speak to him of those mysteries which he as well as we profess to believe, one may chance to get such a flippant reply as may force one to say, "I am more of a Catholic than you, then, for I believe those things from my soul which you only mock at."

"You talk of my spiritual needs," says a young workman; "I have none. Give me plenty to eat and drink and to amuse myself with, I am content." "We know too much now to believe those Bible stories," says a hard-working mother in the hearing of her little children. "These things are very good for children," says a girl not out of her teens, with a complacent smile. "I attended the meeting often," said a young mother to me. "I liked it,—I cannot get the *cantiques* out of my head. I can sing my baby to sleep with nothing else. I wish they could have convinced me, but it is of no use. I cannot believe it. I was educated by nuns, and before I was twelve years old, I found out that their religion was 'a comedy.' So it all seems to me like nonsense. I like to hear it, but I cannot believe a word of it. But"—and her flippant tone changed to one of seriousness—"I certainly see that *you* are people who believe what you say" (*vous êtes des gens convaincus*).

Ay! religion in France has been *disproved* by its own teachers! It must be *proved* in the same way. It was something, I felt—a seed which perhaps might spring up in some day of trouble—that that poor dark soul knew at last that with *some* people faith was a deep reality. But I must return from these dark, sad pictures, to speak of progress and cheer.

I think no one who had been absent a few years from Paris could help noting progress in the general tone of the workers themselves. Never was there more downright, pointed preaching of the Gospel, never such a solemn conviction that *now* is the day of salvation; but, above all, never such a spirit of faith, and prayer, and expectation. I remarked several times, in our

prayer meetings, the sudden, almost involuntary, change of prayer into thanksgiving, as if the assurance that the first drops of a great shower were already falling were too strong to be repressed. From Paris itself, from distant provinces and mountain fastnesses, all told the same story of blessing begun and more blessing expected.

Yes! the work is not where I left it two years ago. The people of France are not where they were two years ago, or six years ago; they are not in any sense as they were twelve years ago. They are waiting for something, even those who know not what it is they seek. Meanwhile a sort of rumour has gone out through all classes that a new thing is in their midst, and curiosity is growing as to what this new thing may be. For France has gone out in quest of a religion. Whether the individual soul in its sad depths owns its need or not, cultured Frenchmen acknowledge that their country *must* have a religion or perish; and thus the question of what that religion is to be occupies all minds. Oh! how one longs to tell them all, "It is not 'a religion' you need; it is 'a Saviour.'"

Yes! It is as in the days of our Lord; some may love the Gospel, and some hate it, some confess it, and some reject it; but one thing is certain, the Word has gone forth—"Notwithstanding, be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you."

M. L. DODDS.

CONTRIBUTIONS

IN AID OF THE MISSION ARE RECEIVED BY

Rev. R. W. McALL, 32 Rue Pierre-Guérin, Auteuil, Paris.
Rev. C. E. GREIG, M.A., 40 Boulevard de Reuilly, Bercy, Paris.
M. R. SAILLENS, 177 Avenue de Maine, Paris.
Rev. Dr. BONAR, Grange, Edinburgh.
FRANK A. BEVAN, Esq., 54 Lombard Street, London. E.C.
Rev. R. S. ASHTON, B.A., Evangelical Continental Society, 13 Blomfield Street, London Wall, London.
Rev. HORACE NOEL, M.A., Foreign Evangelisation Society, Woking Station, Surrey.
Rev. JOHN LYNCH, A.M., Monkstown, Ireland.
By the Treasurers and Secretaries of Associations, and by Directors of Branch Missions.

LORIMER AND GILLIES, PRINTERS, 31 ST. ANDREW SQUARE, EDINBURGH.